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Executive Committee
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M I N U T E S
of the
MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
of the
WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Geneva, Switzerland
February 6-8, 1966

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WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Minutes

of the
meeting of the Executive Committee,
Geneva, February 6 - 8, 1966

Present

Presidents : Archbishop Iakovos
The Rev. Dr Martin Niemöller
Mr Charles Parlin

Chairmen : Dr Franklin Clark Fry
Dr Ernest A. Payne

Members : Professor C.G. Baëta
Bishop Sante Uberto Barbieri
Dr Eugene Carson Blake
Dr Kathleen M. Bliss
Dr Alford Carleton
Principal J.R. Chandran
Dr Ivy Chou
Professor J.L. Hromadka
Archbishop Gunnar Hultgren
Bishop Hanns Lilje
Mr J. Irwin Miller
Archbishop Frank Woods

Substitutes : Metropolitan Emilianos (for Metropolitan Iakovos of Philadelphia)
Bishop Vladimir (for Metropolitan Nikodim of Leningrad and Ladoga)

Consultants : Archpriest Vitaly Borovoi
Sir Kenneth Grubb

Staff :

Rev. Paul Abrecht
Dr Charles W. Arbuthnot
Dr Madeleine Barot
Dr Leslie E. Cooke
Rev. H.A. Hamilton
Rev. Victor E.W. Hayward
Rev. W. Hollenweger
Rev. T.E. Floyd Honey
Miss Margaret Jaboor
Rev. Graeme Jackson
Mr Christopher King
Dr Z. K. Matthews
Mr Philippe Maury
Dr Nikos Nissiotis
Dr O. Fred. Nolde
Mr Frank Northam
Dr Elfan Rees
Rev. Patrick C. Rodger
Dr Eugene L. Smith
Rev. Robbins Strong
Rev. Theo Tschuy
Rev. Albert H. van den Heuvel
Father Paul Verghese
Dr Lukas Vischer
Dr W.A. Visser 't Hooft
Dr Hans-Ruedi Weber
Dr Glen Garfield Williams
Professor Dr H.H. Wolf
Mr Ralph Young

1. The Chairman opened the meeting with prayer.

2. Roll Call

Dr Visser 't Hooft called the roll and presented apologies from the Archbishop of Canterbury, Sir Francis Ibiam, Dr. D. G. Moses, Metropolitan Iakovos of Philadelphia, and Metropolitan Nikodim.

3. Minutes of previous meeting

The Minutes of the previous meeting held in Geneva 11 - 15 July, 1965 had been previously circulated and were adopted with the inclusion of the name of Archbishop Woods as among those present.

4. Report of General Secretary

The General Secretary gave a wide ranging report. Among points he specially emphasised were the increasing importance of the meeting of the representatives of confessional organisations and the Consultation about Vietnam between representatives of the EACC and the NCC of the U.S.A. at which Dr Nolde had acted as consultant. He spoke of the perilous position in which Christian leaders had been in Indonesia and in which all Christians now were in South Sudan. There was little encouragement to report about the position of the Patriarch of Constantinople.

He reported an official invitation to take part in the great Roman Catholic Festival in Poland next summer, but as our member churches and the Ecumenical Council in Poland had not been asked he felt it was preferable not to accept the invitation. He thought we sould derive great encouragement from the wider observance of the Week of Unity throughout the whole world.

The Chairman thanked the General Secretary warmly for his report about which further questions were put to him. Out of the discussion the Committee agreed to uphold the Secretary's decision to decline the invitation to Poland. They further agreed to accept the suggestion made later by him that a recommendation should go to the Central Committee to extend an invitation to attend its next meeting as fraternal delegate to

(a) Conference of the Heads of the Oriental Orthodox Churches

(b) Old Catholic International Organisation

5. Arrangements for Central Committee

(a) The General Secretary presented the proposed programme and timetable for the Central Committee. The latter was amended in closed session by the Executive so that the closed sessions of the Central Committee for election of a new General Secretary would follow the reception by the Geneva authorities and not be divided by it. Both the programme and timetable were then adopted.

(b) Proposals for the agenda and the membership of four policy reference committees, the Nominations and Finance sub-committees were approved after the General Secretary had explained that he hoped that Central Committee would want to remit the document on the main theme, "The Ecumenical Way", for a redrafting by a small but representative group. (Policy Reference Committee IV).

(c) Mr P.C. Rodger outlined the arrangements made for worship including the celebration of the Orthodox Liturgy on Sunday morning and a public service in the Cathedral of St. Pierre on Sunday evening.

6. Report of Executive Committee

A draft of the report of the Executive Committee to the Central Committee was in the hands of members. After slight amendment it was agreed that this be adopted for presentation to Central Committee.

7. Proposals to Central Committee concerning the 4th Assembly

(a) Allocation of seats. A re-examination of the allocation of seats for the 4th Assembly had been made since the last Executive and a revised document was brought before the meeting. Questions of fact were asked but the Executive agreed that the document should be passed on as it stood to Policy Reference Committee II and thence to the Central Committee.

(b) General arrangements: The General Secretary reported that, following a visit of Dr. Fry to the Archbishop of Canterbury to discuss a possible accommodation of dates, agreement had finally been reached that the date of the Assembly for 1968 should be 4 - 20 July, 1968. Dr Fry spoke warmly of the courtesy of the Archbishop of Canterbury in making it possible that the dates of the Lambeth Conference should be changed to avoid clash. Archbishop Hultgren confirmed that reservations had been made for the accommodation of the Assembly. The support of the government and the churches was assured. Much appreciation was shown at the announcement that Archbishop Hultgren was to act as Chairman of the organising committee in Sweden for the Assembly, after his resignation as the Archbishop of Uppsala.

(c) Programme: Mr Hayward referred to the prepared document on the 4th Assembly programme which was before the Committee. He pointed out various alterations and additions which had been made since the recommendations offered by the Executive in July 1965. These were approved and the Committee agreed to remit the document to Policy Reference Committee II for detailed discussion.

8. Report of the Joint Working Group of representatives from the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches.

The General Secretary reported that the Joint Working Group of the Roman Catholic Church and the WCC proposed at Enugu and approved on behalf of the Roman Church by Cardinal Bea on his visit to the new Headquarters, had already met twice. The first meeting was at Bossey in May 1965 and the second in Arricia, near Rome in November 1965. It was out of these two meetings that this first official report had come. Already it had been approved, in official language, "by the authority of the Roman Catholic Church". A motion for similar approval would be brought before the Central Committee. The General Secretary emphasised that much valuable work had been done which had not yet resulted in decisions. The encouragement lay in the new beginnings that were now possible. It was agreed that this report should be referred to Policy Reference Committee No. I and so to Central Committee for discussion, and it was hoped, approval.

9. Structure Committee

The General Secretary drew attention to an action taken by the Central Committee last year and the Chairman read the relevant minute, as follows:

> "that the Executive Committee be asked to consider at its next meeting the time when the Structure Committee can most advantageously be called together."

After a full discussion of the present position of transition, the Committee felt that the new General Secretary should be given some three months in office before the Committee met so that he had time to assess the situation. If the Structure Committee so desired at the meeting they would be holding during Central Committee, the possibility would, however, be open for them to hold an interim meeting between now and then. The Committee agreed to postpone a decision until later in the meeting. (This was completed in closed session).

10. Report of National Council Relationships

The Assistant General Secretary briefly summarised the steps that had been taken since the Enugu recommendation for a special detailed study of the situation, including the consultation that had been held just prior to the last Executive. It was clear not only from this but from the story of the three previous years' discussions that no real progress would be made, nor indeed was any real study possible unless a man could be appointed fulltime to make the necessary enquiries and to begin the work of building up the relationships with National Councils. The Associate General Secretaries concerned had therefore prepared the beginnings of the plans they proposed to discuss with the Committee on Relationships with National Councils during the meeting. In the light of this and the work that would be afterwards necessary, they hoped to present a draft plan for this purpose to the next Executive. The Executive noted this and anticipated the chance to study the report.

11. Reports from Departments

Brief reports were given by Divisions and CCIA. From the Division of Studies Mr. Hayward reported that the Committee on Religious Liberty had just produced a short statement welcoming the Vatican Council's declaration on religious liberty and drawing attention to the new opportunity. It was recommended that this paper be referred to Policy Reference Committee No. I asking them to examine the language carefully in the light of comments made by the Executive.

DWME brought before the Committee a recommendation from the Christian Literature Fund recommending that the terminal date of the life of the existing Committee should be June 30th, 1970. This was adopted. Mr. Strong asked also that recommendations from the Theological Education Fund which had been approved by the DWME Divisional Committee should be accepted by the Executive. These were constitutional changes to permit Mr. Lawrence J. McGregor, who had been a member of the Theological Education Fund Committee ex officio as Chairman of Finance Committee, C.W.M.E., to become an appointed member by name following the dissolution of that Finance Committee. This was approved.

For the Information Department, Mr. Maury reported that he had taken over responsibility from Bishop Newbigin for relations with the proposed Foundation of Christian Statistics of which a first meeting had been held. He made a request for a substitute to be nominated by the WCC to the Institute of Social Studies at the Hague. The name proposed was Professor Olivier Clement, a member of the Russian Orthodox Church teaching in Paris. The Committee approved the substitution.

12. Ecumenical Research Institute

The General Secretary presented a paper on this subject. He believed there was interest in this, not only from generous donors, but from the University of Geneva and felt that we should be doing the responsible thing in going further. He had in mind a five year trial period. In reply to a question, he said he did not feel that this in any way conflicted with the purpose of the Jerusalem Institute and that he would normally expect Roman Catholic participation in the Research Institute as we had at Bossey. He presented an outline draft budget. It was resolved

> that the Executive approve the attempt to secure funds for an Ecumenical Research Institute of a kind and with the organisation suggested in the paper submitted, and authorise the staff to solicit, by the established procedures for seeking support for Programme Projects, resources for capital costs and running expenses for an initial period of five years.

The staff were asked to look again at the adequacy of the suggested budget. It was further agreed that this was not a matter to go forward at this stage to the Central Committee.

13. Applications for membership

The General Secretary presented applications for membership in the Council:- After discussion it was resolved,

(i) to recommend to Central Committee that the following Churches be accepted for membership in the World Council of Churches in accordance with the Rules:

> United Church of Zambia
> Malagasy Lutheran Church
> Orthodox Church of Czechoslovakia
> Episcopal Church of Brazil;

(ii) to recommend to the Central Committee that the following Churches be accepted as associated members of the World Council of Churches:

> Evangelical Methodist Church in Portugal
> Methodist Church in Indonesia.

Discussion took place about the difficulty of clarifying the position of the Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China. It was agreed that it would be wise to try to define their status further and on the suggestion of Dr. Payne, the Executive agreed that meanwhile they should be assured of their relation with the World Council of Churches and of representation at the next Assembly.

14. Report of Finance Sub-Committee

Dr Niemöller introduced and Mr Northam read the following report from the Finance Sub-Committee:

"The Finance Sub-Committee devoted one session of 2 1/4 hours to discussion of the two major financial problems needing consideration at this time, namely the financing of operations under the General Budget until 1968 and the financing of the budget for the Fourth Assembly. The Finance Sub-Committee accepted advice that all other financial questions arising at this time give rise to no serious problems and can be presented direct to the Finance Committee of Central Committee.

The position in respect of operations under the General Budget up to December 31, 1965 is that it is foreseen that little if any deficit will remain to be carried forward to 1966. This is true notwithstanding the fact that income in 1965 will be lower than was foreseen last July, because contributions from the USA are expected to be lower than was foreseen at that time. Expenditure, however, is also lower than was foreseen last July.

Uncertainties regarding developments in 1966, particularly in respect of staff appointments, make accurate forecasting of expenditure in 1966 extremely difficult. It is also difficult to prepare at this time reliable estimates of 1966 income. The best estimates which can be produced, including provision for the expense included in the adoption of the recommendations of the Salaries Committee, suggest a deficit of the order of $ 30,000. The deficit might theoretically be higher but it is perhaps more probable that it might be a little lower. Further increases in expenditure must be foreseen in 1967 and 1968 and there are at present no reasons to foresee any sizeable increase in income; larger deficits may therefore well be incurred in those two years.

The position in respect of budget for the Fourth Assembly is that the only available resources are at present the annual allocations of $ 30,000 set aside from the General Budget, interest earned there on and registration fees. These sources would not provide a sufficient amount for the total budget of the Fourth Assembly.

After full discussion, the Finance Sub-Committee felt that it would not be desirable to present to the Central Committee a deficit budget for 1966 and the prospect of budgets involving larger deficits in 1967 and 1968. It was therefore agreed to suggest that it should be recommended to the Finance Committee of Central Committee:

> that no allocation be made from the General Budget for 1966 or foreseen for the General Budgets for 1967 and 1968 toward the expenses of the Fourth Assembly.

This would mean that a balanced budget totalling $ 960,000 could be presented to the Central Committee.

The Finance Sub-Committee further agreed to suggest that the level of the budget for the Fourth Assembly should provisionally be foreseen as about $ 325 - 350,000. If no allocations are made toward those expenses from General Budget resources in 1966/68, this would mean that it would be necessary to seek additional resources of the order of $ 175 - 200,000. This figure is large but the Finance Sub-Committee felt that it should not be impossible to raise such an amount and that it would be better to seek to raise these additional resources for the Fourth Assembly than to seek to raise a smaller sum for the Fourth Assembly and simultaneously seek means to avoid deficits on the General Budget for 1966/68.

The Finance Sub-Committee therefore suggests that it should be recommended to the Finance Committee of Central Committee:

a) that the level of the budget for the Fourth Assembly be provisionally foreseen at about $ 325 - 350,000 but that staff be requested to seek to limit the level of the budget to the necessary minimum;

b) that, recognising that the fact that plans for the Fourth Assembly are being finalised only at this present meeting and therefore the preparation of a detailed budget has not previously been possible, power be delegated to the Executive Committee to approve a detailed budget for the Fourth Assembly; and

c) that it be noted that, on present provisional estimates, it will be necessary to raise an additional sum of $ 175 - 200,000 for the financing of the Fourth Assembly and that power be given to the Executive Committee to approach member churches for special contributions and to seek gifts from foundations, individuals and any other sources with a view to raising the necessary additional funds for the financing of the budget of the Fourth Assembly."

In reply to a question from Dr Bliss, Dr Fry confirmed that the appropriate Policy Reference Committee of Central Committee would certainly need to give consideration to the preparatory material which would be necessary to make widely known the theme and programme of the Fourth Assembly. Dr Payne expressed reservations as to the wisdom of omitting from the General Budget all provision for expenses of the Fourth Assembly. Dr Fry confirmed that this recommendation would be rediscussed fully in the Finance Committee of Central Committee and that those who are both members of Executive Committee and Finance Committee should feel entirely free to re-examine in the Finance Committee the above recommendations. Mr Parlin pointed out that the prospect of deficits both on the General Budget and the Assembly Budget must be clearly pointed out and faced. One advantage of concentrating the whole deficit on the Assembly Budget would be that support for the Assembly Budget can be sought from sources other than member churches. Dr Blake pointed out that the additional resources needed for the financing of the Fourth Assembly would not, in total, be greatly larger in amount than the special resources secured for the second and third Assemblies. Mr Northam drew attention to the fact that the Finance Committee would need to recommend

to Central Committee that power should be given to the Executive Committee to adopt the General Budget for 1967 and the budget for the Assembly; the Executive Committee would need to deal with these matters at its next two meetings in the light of the discussions in the Finance Committee and the Central Committee.

The Executive Committee, after this discussion agreed to adopt the recommendations in the above report from the Finance Sub-Committee.

15. Future Meetings of Executive

The following dates were brought to the notice of members for future meetings:

Monday August 8th to Thursday, August 11th, 1966
Monday February 13th to Thursday February 16th, 1967

and on the days immediately preceeding the next Central Committee (August 1967).

16. Central Committee 1967

The General Secretary reported a strong formal invitation from the Church of Crete to entertain the Central Committee in 1967. Archbishop Iakovos confirmed that the church is wholly committed to this invitation and hoped it will be accepted. On assurances given by Father Paul Verghese that adequate accommodation would be available, both in hotels and for public meetings, it was agreed that this invitation should be forwarded to Central Committee. It would be recommended to Policy Reference Committee I that the meeting should be held in the latter half of August with a proviso that it could not extend to September.

17. Closing Devotions

These were led by Dr. Baëta.

During this period closed sessions of the Committee were held to consider staffing and special finance reports, the Chairmanship of the Central Committee and arrangements for the Central Committee's closed sessions. Minutes of these are in the hands of the Executive; but as the report of these was afterwards made public, the account is appended here.

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APPENDIX I

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

in Closed Session

Sunday February 13th, 1966

1) Dr Fry read a statement concerning the chairmanship of the Central Committee. This statement was fully discussed. All agreed in their appreciation of the spirit of the statement and all expressed the desire that Dr Fry should continue as chairman until the completion of his period of office.
It was finally decided to ask Dr Payne

   a) to present Dr Fry's statement to the Executive Committee together with the comments of the Executive Committee *

   b) to propose to the Central Committee that a second vice-chairman should be appointed from a continent other than North America.

2) Committee on Structure

It was decided to authorise the officers to decide after consultation with the members of the Committee on Structure present in Geneva at the time, when the next meeting of the Committee on Structure should be held.

3) Future meetings

It was decided that the meeting of the Executive Committee in February 1967 should be held in Great Britain.

* The relevant document is printed as an appendix to the Central Committee Report.

THE PROJECT OF AN ECUMENICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

At Odessa and at Tutzing the Executive Committee encouraged the staff to explore the possibilities of establishing a WCC Ecumenical Institute, and directed "that discreet enquiries be made among churches of various confessions as to whether they believe such a project to be important at this time, and whether their interest might include financial support of a sufficient amount to assure an adequate annual budget, in the hope that the interest of individuals or foundations might be developed for necessary capital expenditures and possibly current expenses in an initial period." Indications of real interest have since been received from various quarters. Among these are recorded the following minute of the Faith and Order Working Committee, meeting at Aarhus in August 1964: "The Working Committee learned with interest that the Executive Committee of the World Council had responded positively to tentative proposals for the establishment of a WCC Ecumenical Research Institute as soon as opportunity affords. The Committee warmly welcomed this possibility, recognizing a real need for more theological research than can be done with present Study Division resources, the fact that research institutes are being set up within certain confessions, the desirability of having facilities for prolonged ecumenical encounter and co-operation in this sphere, and the general usefulness for Faith and Order work of a focusing point for utilizing the theological research being carried on in many different places."

Before it receives a report on the present situation regarding this project, the Committee may well be reminded of the following paragraphs from the original document in which the proposal was put forward:

1. Need

It is evident that many feel the need for such an institution. There is a great programme of studies within the WCC, but the staff does not have sufficient time to do real research work on the problems arising in these study projects. Experience shows, however, that genuine research is needed for the successful follow-through of most studies. This is felt in almost all departments of the WCC, but especially by the Faith and Order Department. It is true that theological faculties can and should be asked to assist our departments in the prosecution of their study projects. Everything of course should be done to encourage ecumenical research in existing theological faculties. Nevertheless the fact must be recognized that, as a rule, such faculties seldom feel under the pressure of the problems of the ecumenical movement, nor do they normally have the facilities for fully ecumenical research. A research institute set up within the WCC would serve the process of ecumenical studies much more effectively.

It must be emphasized that, in our thinking, the research done by such an institute would supplement the normal study processes in the ecumenical movement through which, though their dialogue or conversation is organized in varying ways, the churches together seek a deeper understanding of their common calling and of the ways in which this is to be fulfilled in the modern world. Further, we believe that such a focal point for ecumenical research would enable more, and not less, use to be made of the research being done on a less comprehensive basis in other quarters.

In many questions of general ecumenical strategy theological aspects are involved and need clarification. It would be of great help if qualified

theologians and other scholars could spend time on preparing theological advice for the committees and staff of the WCC. This need arises especially at a time when not only is there a developing Protestant - Orthodox dialogue within the WCC, but also relations between the WCC and the Roman Catholic Church are becoming increasingly important.

2. Relationship to the WCC

Two aspects have to be taken into account. Theological study must be carried on in a detached atmosphere. Without independence it must degenerate to 'ancilla necessitatis hodiernae' and theologians inevitably become ideologists. Theologians of high quality can be attracted only if they are assured that their work will not be dominated by the daily needs of the WCC.

On the other hand theology should not become an aim in itself. The research work should not be carried out in isolation from the work done in the WCC. There is no reason for an ecumenical research institute if it does not take up problems which otherwise are not dealt with. It would be the task of the board of the Research Institute and of the staff to select in consultation with the General Secretariat the main subjects of research to be taken up each year.

Obviously the Research Institute should be set up to serve the whole World Council. Its relationship to the Division of Studies will have to be clearly defined. Departments of the WCC should be allowed to submit specific problems to the Research Institute for study and clarification, but the Research Institute should not be obliged to accept every task which it is asked to fulfil.

It is also important that the theologians of the Research Institute do not work anonymously under the auspices of the WCC. Their work should be done in their own name.

3. Purpose

Thus the functions of the research institute could be described in the following way:

a) to do research work on ecumenical problems, the subjects selected being such as require long-term study in a fully ecumenical setting and are recognized as essential to the progress of the ecumenical movement as a whole.

b) if time allows, to contribute to study projects of the various departments of the WCC;

c) to give theological advice to the leaders and staff of the WCC;

d) to give some help to the Graduate School of the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey;

e) to be in contact with theological faculties, to advise people writing their theses, and to encourage research work at theological faculties;

f) to train younger research workers in genuinely ecumenical research.

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The following paragraphs modify the original proposal in the light of further reflection and discussion:

4. Organization

A location for the Research Institute should be sought between Bossey and the WCC headquarters (e.g. at Versoix), to make possible easy access to the two libraries as well as to facilitate working relationships with the staff at both places. It should be set up with its own Board (appointed by the WCC Central Committee), its own administration and its own budget.

Consideration should be given to the establishment of one Joint Board for liaison between the University of Geneva, the proposed Ecumenical Research Institute, and the Graduate School of the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey.

5. Staff

There should be at least three permanent research fellows representing various traditions. If at all possible, it will be of great importance to have a member of the Orthodox Church on the staff. It must be recognized from the outset that everything cannot be expected from three men. Even though theologians of great reputation accept invitations to work at the Institute, possibilities will remain limited. The hope will therefore be to develop the work of the Research Institute by inviting theologians for shorter periods, in addition to the permanent staff members. It may also be that professors on sabbatical leave will be glad to spend a year at the Institute. Churches may want to send young theologians to assist with special research projects.

6. Buildings and Budget.

The plan in mind is to purchase and adapt some existing building. Though no definite figure can be given for this, what is regarded as a reasonable sum for the purpose is included in the tentative budget proposed below. Accommodation required would include apartments for the three research fellows and their families, housing for housekeeper and secretaries, and facilities for guests.

a) Capital expenditure on purchase and adaptation of a country house — SwFr 1,500,000.-

b) Annual budget

Salaries for three permanent staff members	SwFr 100,000.-
Salaries for three secretaries	45,000.-
Salary for housekeeper (possibly family)	20,000.-
Office expenses, translation of documents, etc.	20,000.-
Books (purchase of current literature for library)	5,000.-
Upkeep of buildings and heating	35,000.-
Guests	10,000.-
General and unforeseen expenses	25,000.-
	SwFr 260,000.-

7. The Financial Question

There is a real possibility of a substantial grant from one interested Foundation. If authorization is given to proceed, the first step should be to attempt to secure comparable support from at least one other Foundation, so as to establish the Institute on an international basis.

The question now asked of the Executive Committee is whether the staff can proceed with the project, provided that the necessary capital and running expenses for an initial period of five years can be found outside of the WCC general budget.